

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend independent Claims 1, 3, 6, 13, 16, 19, 21 and 33-48 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
encryption means, for encrypting a life counter for content data;
addition means, for adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file; and
transmission means, for externally transmitting, via a network, said content data
file having said added life counter,
wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by
the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced
value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.
2. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
said transmission means externally transmits said content data file via the Internet.
3. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
reception means, for externally receiving, via a network, a content data file to
which an encrypted life counter has been added;
processing means, for processing said content data file;
subtraction means, for subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life
counter; and
control means, for inhibiting said processing means from processing said content
data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value
smaller than said specific value,

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wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

4. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said reception means externally receives said content data file via the Internet.

5. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said processing means displays, prints or reproduces data in said content data file.

6. (Currently Amended) An information processing system whereby a first information processing apparatus and a second information processing apparatus are interconnected, wherein said first information apparatus comprises:

 encryption means, for encrypting a life counter for content data,
 addition means, for adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file, and
 transmission means, for transmitting, via a network, said content data file having said added life counter to said second information apparatus; and

 wherein said second information processing apparatus comprises:
 reception means, for receiving, via a network, from said first information processing apparatus a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added,
 processing means, for processing said content data file,
 subtraction means, for subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter; and

control means, for inhibiting said processing means from processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a number smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file .

7. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 6, wherein said transmission means or said reception means externally transmits or receives said content data file via the Internet.

8. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 7, wherein said processing means displays, prints or reproduces data in said content data file.

9. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 8, wherein said second information processing apparatus further comprises:

copying means, for copying said content data file including said encrypted life counter; and

counter control means, for reducing, to half a value, the value held by life counters of a source file that is copied and a destination file when copying said content data file.

10. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 8, wherein said second information processing apparatus further comprises:

moving means, for moving said content data file without changing the value held by said encrypted life counter.

11. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 8, wherein said first information processing apparatus further comprises:

determination means, for determining the value to be held by said life counter in correlation with the frequency of the display, printing or reproduction of said content data.

12. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 8, wherein said first information processing apparatus further comprises:

determination means, for determining the value to be held by said life counter in correlation with a content data reproduction time, and wherein said subtraction means of said second information processing apparatus decrements the value held by said encrypted life counter by a value correlated with a period of time during which said content data is reproduced.

13. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
data transmission means, for externally transmitting, via a network, a content data file;

life counter transmission means, for externally transmitting, via said network, a life counter for said content data file;

program transmission means, for externally transmitting, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file,

wherein the application program file includes processing instructions such that, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, the specific value is one half the value held by the encrypted life counter and wherein the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

14. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said data transmission means, said life counter transmission means and said program transmission means externally transmit said content data file via the Internet.

15. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said application program file is used to display, print or reproduce data in said content data file.

16. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
data reception means, for receiving, via a network, a content data file;
life counter reception means, for receiving, via said network, a life counter for said content data file;
program reception means, for receiving, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file;
encryption means, for encrypting said life counter;
addition means, for adding said encrypted life counter to said content data file;
transmission means, for transmitting, via said network, said application program file to a different information processing apparatus; and
control means, for permitting the reading only of the content data file for an application program that is currently being executed by said different information processing apparatus,
wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

17. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said data reception means, said life counter reception means and said program reception means externally receive said content data file via the Internet.

18. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said application program file is used to display, print or reproduce data in said content data file.

19. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

reception means, for receiving, via a network, an application program file for processing content data from a different information processing apparatus;

processing means, for executing, via said network, said application program for processing content data stored in said different information processing apparatus;

subtraction means, for subtracting, via said network, a specific value from a life counter for said content data stored in said different information processing apparatus each time said content data file is processed;

control means, for inhibiting said processing means from processing content data when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

20. (Original) An information processing apparatus according to claim 19, wherein, via said network, said processing means displays, prints or reproduces data in said content data file.

21. (Currently Amended) An information processing system whereby a first information processing apparatus, a second information processing apparatus and a third information processing apparatus are interconnected, wherein said first information processing apparatus comprises:

data transmission means, for transmitting, via a network, a content data file to said second information processing apparatus,

life counter transmission means, for transmitting, via said network, a life counter for said content data file to said second information processing apparatus, and

program transmission means, for transmitting, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file to said second information processing apparatus;

wherein said second information processing apparatus comprises:

data reception means, for receiving, via said network, said content data file from said first information apparatus,

life counter reception means, for receiving, via said network, a life counter for said content data file from said first information processing apparatus,

program reception means, for receiving, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file from said first information processing apparatus,

encryption means, for encrypting said life counter,

addition means, for adding said encrypted life counter to said content data file,

transmission means, for transmitting, via said network, said application program file to said third information processing apparatus, and

control means for permitting the reading of the content data file only for an application program that is currently being executed by said third information processing apparatus; and

wherein said third information processing apparatus comprises:

reception means, for receiving, via said network, an application program file for processing content data received from said second information processing apparatus,

processing means, for executing, via said network, said application program for processing content data stored in said second information processing apparatus;

subtraction means, for subtracting, via said network, a specific value from a life counter for said content data stored in said different information processing apparatus each time said content data file is processed,

control means, for inhibiting said processing means from processing content data when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced a value smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

22. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 21, wherein said data transmission means, said life counter transmission means and said program transmission means, or said data reception means, said life counter reception means and said program reception means externally transmit or receive said content data file via the Internet.

23. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 22, wherein said processing means displays, prints or reproduces data in said content data file.

24. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said processing means inhibits the copying of said content data having said encrypted life counter stored in said second information processing apparatus, even if said application program is executed.

25. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said processing means inhibits the moving of said content data having said encrypted life counter stored in said second information processing apparatus, even if said application program is executed.

26. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said first information processing apparatus further comprises:

determination means, for determining the value to be held by said life counter in correlation with the frequency of the display, printing or reproduction of said content data.

27. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said first information processing apparatus further comprises:

determination means, for determining the value to be held by said life counter in correlation with a content data reproduction time, and wherein said subtraction means decrements the value held by said encrypted life counter by a value correlated with a period of time during which said content data is reproduced.

28. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said second information processing apparatus further comprises:
printing means, for printing content data on a sheet.

29. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said data reception means of said second information processing apparatus receives a content data file via the Internet, encrypts said content data file, and stores the encrypted content data file; and wherein said processing means of said third information processing apparatus decrypts said encrypted content data file, and displays, prints or reproduces the decrypted content data file.

30. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said second information processing apparatus is a peripheral device having an Internet connection function.

31. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said second information processing apparatus is a LAN server having an Internet connection function.

32. (Original) An information processing system according to claim 23, wherein said second information processing apparatus is a network connection device having an Internet connection function.

33. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) encrypting a life counter for content data;
- (b) adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file; **and**
- (c) for externally transmitting, via a network, said content data file having said added life counter; **and**
- (d) when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file .**

34. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) externally receiving, via a network, a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added;
- (b) processing said content data file;
- (c) subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter; **and**
- (d) inhibiting said step (b) for processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value; **and**
- (e) when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file .**

35. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) externally transmitting, via a network, a content data file;

(b) externally transmitting, via said network, a life counter for said content data file; and

(c) externally transmitting, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file,

wherein the application program contains instructions such that, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

36. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving, via a network, a content data file;
- (b) receiving, via said network, a life counter for said content data file;
- (c) receiving, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file;
- (d) encrypting said life counter;
- (e) adding said encrypted life counter to said content data file;
- (f) transmitting, via said network, said application program file to a different information processing apparatus; and
- (g) permitting the reading only of the content data file for an application program that is currently being executed by said different information processing apparatus; and
- (h) when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

37. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving, via a network, an application program file for processing content data from a different information processing apparatus;
- (b) executing, via said network, said application program for processing content data stored in said different information processing apparatus;
- (c) subtracting, via said network, a specific value from a life counter for said content data stored in said different information processing apparatus each time said content data file is processed; and
- (d) inhibiting said step (b) for processing content data when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value; and
- (e) when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

38. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program is stored that permits a computer to perform:

- (a) a process for encrypting a life counter for content data;
- (b) a process for adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file; and
- (c) a process for externally transmitting, via a network, said content data file having said added life counter; and
- (d) a process for, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

39. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program is stored that permits a computer to perform:

- (a) a process for externally receiving, via a network, a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added;
- (b) a process for processing said content data file;
- (c) a process subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter; and
- (d) a process for inhibiting said step (b) for processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value; and
- (e) a process for, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

40. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program is stored that permits a computer to perform:

- (a) a process for externally transmitting, via a network, a content data file;
- (b) a process for externally transmitting, via said network, a life counter for said content data file; and
- (c) a process for externally transmitting, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file,
wherein the application program contains instructions such that, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

41. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program is stored that permits a computer to perform:

- (a) a process for receiving, via a network, a content data file;
- (b) a process for receiving, via said network, a life counter for said content data file;
- (c) a process for receiving, via said network, an application program file for processing said content data file;
- (d) a process for encrypting said life counter;
- (e) adding said encrypted life counter to said content data file;
- (f) a process for transmitting, via said network, said application program file to a different information processing apparatus; and
- (g) a process for permitting the reading only of the content data file for an application program that is currently being executed by said different information processing apparatus; and
- (h) a process for, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

42. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which a program is stored that permits a computer to perform:

- (a) a process for receiving, via a network, an application program file for processing content data from a different information processing apparatus;
- (b) a process for executing, via said network, said application program for processing content data stored in said different information processing apparatus;

(c) a process for subtracting, via said network, a specific value from a life counter for said content data stored in said different information processing apparatus each time said content data file is processed; and

(d) a process for inhibiting said step (b) for processing content data when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value; and

(e) a process for, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, reducing a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied by one half and copying the reduced value to a life counter of the destination file.

43. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:
encryption means, for encrypting a life counter for content data; and
addition means, for adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file,
wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

44. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

encrypting a life counter for content data; and
adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file,
wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

45. (Currently Amended) A storage medium which stored a program, said program comprising the steps of:

encrypting a life counter for content data; and

adding said encrypted life counter to a content data file,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

46. (Currently Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

input means, for externally inputting a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added;

processing means, for processing said content data file;

subtraction means, for subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter each time said content data file is processed; and

control means, for inhibiting said processing means from processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

47. (Currently Amended) An information processing method comprising the steps of:

externally inputting a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added;

processing said content data file;

subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter each time said content data file is processed; and

inhibiting said processing means from processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.

48. (Currently Amended) A storage medium which stored a program, said program comprising the steps of:

externally inputting a content data file to which an encrypted life counter has been added;

processing said content data file;

subtracting a specific value from said encrypted life counter each time said content data file is processed; and

inhibiting said processing means from processing said content data file when the value held by said encrypted life counter has been reduced to a value smaller than said specific value,

wherein, when the content data file is copied to a destination file, a value held by the life counter of the content data file being copied is reduced by one half and the reduced value is copied to a life counter of the destination file.